

Facilities Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2008, 5:30 pm
Madison County Courthouse, Virginia City, MT

Persons present: Chairman John Scully, Commissioner Jim Hart, Sheriff David Schenk, Marylou Freese, Toni James, George Means, Dona Lindsey, Vergil Lindsey, Marilyn Tucker, Nancy Lien Griffin, Evalyn Johnsen, Pat Bradley, Angela Mueller, Frank Nelson, Bill Doggett, Roger Williams, Justin Gatewood, Kim Hudson, Paul Marsh, Bill Hanley, Jay Willett

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by Chairman Scully.

The minutes were approved as presented.

Chairman Scully read a letter from Dr. Swoboda.

Chairman Scully read a list of the FAC members that were identified in the May meeting.

Nancy Lien Griffin Presentation:

Nancy began her presentation by saying that the draft survey is simply a draft and that it can and should be improved upon. The current draft is simply to start the survey creation process. She said that in talking to residents, Madison County has an opportunity to create a county seat as a model for other communities. She feels that because of opinions that have been formed, the commission should take into consideration all opinions because the residents of the county want to be heard on this issue. She went on to say that giving people an opportunity to express themselves never muddies the issue, it only creates clarification. She explained that the best way to create the survey is with a working group. The survey should take less than fifteen minutes to complete. Analysis of the survey would be easier if it is online. To inform people of the survey, a card would be sent to registered voters with instructions on how to take the survey. There would be an option for people to take the survey by another means than the internet if someone is not internet savvy. A .05% return rate is normal.

Pat Bradley Response:

Pat handed out an outline to the objection. A copy can be obtained from Secretary Robin Blazer.

Question: What is a solution rather than asking survey questions?

Chairman Scully responded by saying that the committee can move forward with the new information and make informed, examined directional decisions. His opinion is that the survey is premature.

Discussion followed regarding the clarification of set members and their roles within the community and how their roles are imperative to informing the public of the options set before the committee. The facts and all options would need to be flushed out before another question is asked of the community in survey or voting form.

Sheriff Schenk stated that it seems like there are more issues on the survey than what the FAC is looking at. He likes the ideas, but the survey is premature. The committee needs to look at all of the options first before the survey is released to the public.

Kim Hudson stated that many people don't have all of the facts. The facts need to be brought out to the public before a public survey is released.

Angela Mueller countered that the committee might be surprised with the results of the survey.

Virgil Lindsey state that the vote failed twice, but no-one knows exactly why. The survey can ask voters what they want.

George Means stated that the survey will not only answer opinion questions, but will also let us know what the public doesn't know.

Chairman Scully placed the question of who wants a survey. There were 12 yes votes and 5 no votes. The yes votes established that their votes would be valid only with a working group established to work on and fine-tune the survey. A working group of 5 people was established: Bob Miller, Nancy Lien Griffin, Kim Hudson, Toni James, and Angela Mueller.

Bill Hanley Presentation:

Bill handed out a paper outline of his presentation at a previous meeting. Bill went through the old book and looked at the court extension. He is concerned that the extension does not solve the office space problem. He changed his prior proposal to agree with Kim Hudson's. He will re-consider the original proposal that the voters turned down.

Kim Hudson Presentation:

Kim handed out a paper outline of his presentation at a previous meeting. Kim began by stating that his current proposal is for a larger footprint of the current courthouse building. The Panke house is getting worse, and a decision needs to be made quickly for county employees. The community center can be looked into as a temporary housing solution - possibly swap the attorney's office and the commissioners.

Chairman Scully thanked all of the presenters and continued with two present options for the current courthouse:

1. Extend the courthouse to a level that says nothing really is gained – just elevators and restrooms.
2. Do nothing.

Discussion ensued regarding the expansion of the courthouse. Storage, office space, handicap access, safety, jail conditions, building upgrades, and other issues were discussed.

Chairman Scully said that the discussion can now be narrowed down to three available questions, and asked the committee to consider the following:

1. Consider that temporary housing is going to be needed regardless of the plan.
2. The committee needs to consider the needs of Madison County as a whole. Only the opinions have been heard about Virginia City's needs.
3. The committee needs to talk to communities along the way to hear from the public and sell the idea to them.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, August 6, 2008, at 5:30 pm in the Virginia City Courthouse.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Robin Blazer.